

Reference 28

From: "Cady, Ronald" <ronald_c@ldeq.org>
To: <MCORDELL@tnrcc.state.tx.us>
Date: 10/30/01 12:56PM
Subject: (mineral spirits and vinyl acetate) from Westlake Polymers in Sulphur, LA.

Ms. Cordell:

My name is Ronald L. Cady and I investigated the above facility and it's handling of mineral spirits with vinyl acetate. The odorless mineral spirits is used as a carrier for the reactants in the production of polyethylene. Vinyl acetate (VA) is a reactant to produce one type of polyethylene. In their processes the mineral spirits are recycled until they become too contaminated to use and would be classed as a spent solvent. Westlake Polymers segregates the two streams and labels them V-240 (OMS) and V-242 (OMS with VA) in the past they had been classifying the mineral spirits as a co-product. We discovered this when I got an inquiry from TNRCC concerning the V-242 stream. It had been purchased by John Cooke and was being sent to a refinery in Texas. There it was being refined. The vinyl acetate and other impurities were removed and the mineral spirits were recovered and sold. Mr. Cooke had stored the vinyl acetate in a leased tank. The concentrated VA polymerized and the tank failed resulting in a release that was cleaned up by the state.

Brain Lynch- TNRCC Special Investigator and Andrea Abat- EPA CID were involved in the investigations and were provided information by this office. Several reports and actions were supplied and Mr. Cooke was brought to trial.

I don't know exactly what you need but if I can be of any assistance please let me know.

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